

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1691

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T PHNOM PENH 5934

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, EAGR, CB, TH

SUBJ: THAI RICE FOR CAMBODIA

REF: STATE 116417

FOR GODLEY AND MASTERS FROM SWANK

1. SOHLIN AND I RECOMMENDED TO PRIME MINISTER IN TAM AND FOREIGN MINISTER LONG BORET THIS MORNING THAT THE GKR SEND A DELEGATION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO BANGKOK FOR THE PURPOSE OF REQUESTING THE SHIPMENT OF 10,000 TONS OF THAI RICE TO CAMBODIA TO MEET IMMEDIATE REQUIREMENTS AND AS AN EXCEPTION TO THE CURRENT EXPORT BAN.

2. IN TAM AND LONG BORET WERE RECEPTIVE TO THIS SUGGESTION AND WILL PROBABLY CONVOKE THAI AMBASSADOR CHANA SAMUDAVANIJA LATER TODAY TO ASK HIM TO MAKE THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS WITH HIS GOVERNMENT. OUR SUGGESTION WAS THAT THE DELEGATION BE HEADED BY LONG BORET, WHO AS FOREIGN MINISTER WOULD HAVE DIRECT ACCESS TO PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER THANOM, WITH MINISTER OF COMMERCE SAPHON SARASY AND A REPRESENTATIVE OF SONEXIM (LY KIM HENG IF HE IS BACK FROM PARIS) AS MEMBERS.

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3. AT THIS MEETING I INDICATED THAT WE OURSELVES MAY BE PREPARED TO DIVERT SOME AMERICAN RICE (NO QUANTITY SPECIFIED) FROM SOUTH VIETNAM TO MEET CAMBODIA'S ADDITIONAL PRESSING REQUIRMENTS ABOVE THE 10,000 TONS WHICH WE HOPE THE GKR WILL OBTAIN AND WHICH WE ARE PREPARED TO FINANCE FROM THAILAND.

4. DURING THE CONVERSATION LONG BORET INFORMED US THAT HE HAS REQUESTED JAPANESE AMBASSADOR SUGIURA TO FURNISH RICE TO CAMBODIA. SUGIURA ALLUDED TO THE FORTHCOMING DEPOSIT BY JAPAN OF THE FIRST TRANCHE OF ITS ESF CONTRIBUTION AND REFERRED TO THE POSSIBILITY THAT A PORTION OF IT MIGHT BE USED TO PURCHASE RICE FOR CAMBODIA.

WE COMMENTED TO LONG BORET THAT ESF FUNDS USED TO PURCHASE RICE WOULD REDUCE OTHER NEEDED IMPORTS BY A CORRESPONDING AMOUNT BUT STATED THAT WE WOULD DEFER THIS POSSIBILITY TO WASHINGTON FOR COMMENT. THERE WAS APPARENTLY NO DISCUSSION OF THE QUANTITY THAT MIGHT BE INVOLVED.

5. IN TAM INFORMED US THAT HIS GOVERNMENT IS CONSIDERING TODAY THE PACKAGE OF ECONOMIC MEASURES DISCUSSED IN PHNOM PENH 5896 (NOT SENT BANGKOK). HE IMPLIED APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED PLAN FOR INCREASING RICE PRICES AND SALARIES AND ELIMINATING SUBSIDIES.
SWANK

SECRET

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*** Current Classification *** SECRET

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